Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

It is an admirable editorial on money that Liberty reprints from the Boston "Globe." But what does the writer mean when he says that free money "would not in the slightest degree diminish the legitimate earnings of capital"? If he means to say indirectly that all the earnings of capital are illegitimate, he is right; if he means anything else, he is mistaken.

Communism, says Burnette G. Haskell, is "the apotheosis of ignorance attempting an impossibility"; it "urges society to remodel human nature and human affairs at one fell blow"; it "is a childish concept." With this Liberty agrees unreservedly; but did not Haskell write a long letter to the "Twentieth Century" in defence of Nationalism, and did he not call himself a Nationalist? Does he not know that Bellamy is a Communist and that "Looking Backward" repudiates the collectivist principle of unequal pay for unequal work? If he does not, then he is ignorant of the essential differences between Communism and collectivism or State Socialism. If he does, then he is to be congratulated on his own just and frank characterization of himself. Here is at least one Bellamy Communist who has the sense to realize, and the honesty to proclaim, that he is a fool.

The "Commonweal," which has sadly degenerated since William Morris left its editorial chair, thinks it very impudent in Liberty to ignore the existence of the "Communist-Anarchists," and says: "That queer product of Anglo-Saxondom, the Individualist-Anarchist, should remember that, outside a few score of people in England and the States, he has no existence, whereas Socialist Anarchism (be it Communist or Collectivist) is spreading far and wide." Liberty would be the last to decide the merit of any school by an appeal to numbers; but, since that test is chosen by the "Commonweal," it is in order for Liberty to remind its critic over the ocean that, while the "Commonweal" is vainly appealing for aid to save it from approaching death, Liberty lives and grows as the oldest and most influential Anarchistic journal published in the English language, and the "Twentieth Century," an outspoken organ of Individualist-Anarchism, enjoys a circulation more than three times as large as the combined circulations of all the "Communist-Anarchist" journals in Anglo-Saxondom.

Liberty was prompt in expressing delight at the results of the recent elections. But it is sorry to see that such an intelligent and anti-humbug paper as the Galveston "News" joins the procession of partisan editors in the attempt to make a mountain out of a mole-hill and to raise expectations which cannot be even approximately fulfilled. The interests of progress require a sober estimate of things and events, and the people who are misled into making much ado about a trifle (whether that trifle is in itself on the side of progress or reaction) are thereby disqualified from exercising proper influence on the course of politics. As a result of the Democratic triumph and Republican defeat in the recent elections, if we are to believe the "News," "industry is reassured. Sectionalism and the fear and distrust which follow in its train are almost banished. Americans have renewed faith in each other. Honesty and the general good are principles that stand at par in public estimation." Now, this is going much too far. The Democratic congressmen are sure to prove themselves utterly incapable of understanding and doing what the needs of industry really render necessary. Perhaps even, in one way or another, they will manage to make a much sorrier spectacle of themselves than Reed and his puppets have done.

While welcoming as an encouraging sign of the times the new economic movement in England which Mr. Yarros sketches in another column, I cannot thoroughly share my associate's enthusiasm regarding it. There are unmistakable signs at the start that its boasted catholicity is much overrated. When the proposed new economic journal is fairly started, I hope that Mr. Yarros will offer it a manuscript on the advantages of mutual banking. In that case he will be speedily informed by Mr. Courtney, M. P., or by Professor Marshall, that gentlemen who "suggest that an unlimited supply of paper will cover all the difficulties of the world" belong in the same category with those who hope to square the circle, and cannot be listened to by scientific men. His manuscript will be declined with thanks and a sneer. Of course the words quoted are not properly applicable to the theory of mutual banking. Nevertheless they are supposed to be, by economists orthodox and heterodox. Of that Mr. Yarros may be sure. But even if the Courtneys and the Marshalls should prove exceptions to the rule by distinguishing between paper-money systems instead of lumping them, it would still be uncatholic to refuse a hearing to the greenbackers. I deem the fiat-money theory exceedingly unsound, but it is idle to deny that it has been and is maintained by men of marked ability. Such men cannot decently be refused a hearing.

Referring to Wanamaker's recommendation that the Federal Government should go into the business of establishing postal savings banks, the New York "Sun" says: "Cannot the people of this country take care of their money without the assistance of the government? .... The Post Office Department does not do the work already committed to its charge with such conspicuous success as to convince the people that it ought to be entrusted with a banking business in addition. In this very report of Mr. Wanamaker's he denounces the New York Post Office building as totally inadequate to the requirements of the postal service, and says that better quarters are needed; yet it was only a few years ago that this building was put up by a Republican Administration at immense expense, and now it is condemned by a Republican Postmaster General." Two years ago Liberty called the "Sun's" attention to the unconstitutionality of the monopoly of the mails. It is to be hoped, now that it admits the failure of the government postal service, that the "Sun" will look into the legal principles involved and come out squarely in favor of private mails and free competition in the business. It is also to be hoped that the ignorant State Socialists who persist in holding up the alleged success of the postal service as an unanswerable practical argument for State monopoly in all things, will note the admission of such an authority in questions of this character as the "Sun" and cease making fools of themselves.

Col. Ingersoll has written a letter to "Kate Field's Washington" protesting against the Thanksgiving humbug. The first paragraph is sensible and refreshing; but the concluding paragraphs are disgustingly nonsensical. Here is the opening paragraph: "I don't believe in Thanksgiving. I deny the right of the President of the United States to issue such a proclamation. I agree with Thomas Jefferson, who refused to issue anything of the sort. He said that a Thanksgiving proclamation was an impertinence; that this government was secular, and that it was pledged not to tamper with religion." And here is the asinine conclusion: "I have no reason to be thankful. I refuse to rejoice in the wholesale defeat of the Republican party. I am a protectionist, not for money, but because I believe protection makes better citizens. First, man is a hunting and fishing animal; then he tills the soil. Stop at the farmer, and you stop at stupidity. It is varied industries, arts, and manufactures that develop humanity. I would protect everything that we can produce, while I'd let in everything else free. I don't know the provisions of the McKinley bill. I do know, however, that I'm not at all thankful for the results of the election. I am not happy at the sight of triumphant Democracy; and, with the Greeks, I feel like exclaiming, 'In the presence of human stupidity, even the gods stand helpless!'" Ingersoll's attitude moves *me* to exclaim that in the presence of *his* stupidity even the gods stand helpless.

It seems that the recent financial panic, unlike previous experiences, has led to results over which individualists may congratulate themselves. The Albany "Express" says: "James Colgate, the well-known New York banker and friend of Secretary Windom, said last Friday that the English panic had caused many men to change their opinions. For years Great Britain has been trying to sustain an enormous credit, touching every part of the globe, upon a gold basis. It now seems to be demonstrated that that basis was entirely insufficient, and with the growing development of the business of the world, gold is becoming relatively dearer and dearer. Mr. Colgate declared he was astonished to find so many financiers in New York who until recently had been gold men, who have changed their views within the last few weeks and are now ready to admit that England's treatment of silver is one of the prime factors which brought about the recent disaster. He says he 'finds a growing sentiment among the bankers and financiers that the present condition of things will hasten the ultimate legislation of the United States in the direction of free coinage.' That declaration, coming from such a source, cannot fail but produce a marked effect. At all events it will renew discussion and set many men to thinking who had, as they thought, satisfactorily settled the silver problem in their own minds." Of course, free coinage is only a short step in the direction of free banking and free credit, but the step is important, and the favoring of it indicates the removal of strong prejudices and that blind faith in gold which, while unshaken, was proof against the most convincing logic of arguments as well as events.

Military Glory.

[Alphonse Karr.]

We worship military glory, which consists in killing, without hatred and without reason, the greatest possible number of men born under another sky, and under conditions so singular that, if tomorrow their country should submit, after having been sufficiently ravaged, it becomes a crime punished by law, by honor, and by universal contempt, to kill a single one of its inhabitants, whom yesterday it was so glorious to massacre.

Proudhon, the Father of Anarchism.

HIS PERSONALITY AND HIS PHILOSOPHY.

[From Dr. S. Engländer's "Abolition of the State."]

The idea of the abolition of the State was most profoundly explained by Proudhon, whose system is based not only on political motives, but also politico-economical reasons. Since his death his name has been less prominent. There was, however, a time when his banner was considered in France as synonymous with a social cataclysm; and the horrors of the Commune in Paris are even now attributed to the misunderstanding of his ideas.

Proudhon is the philosopher of the French Revolution of 1848; and as the ancients carried with them their bards into the battle, so he, the dreamer, accompanies the revolutionary combatants and rejoices in their work. In June, 1848, while on all sides the battle was raging, he stood on one of the bridges, and being asked by a representative what he was doing there, replied, as he pointed to the cannon-balls hurling through the air and the burning houses, that he was gazing on the sublime and dreadful play. This circumstance has, it is true, been denied; but those who knew Proudhon best firmly believe it, so characteristic is it of the man. If true, his feelings as he there stood must have been those of an astronomer who, having prophesied the destruction of the world, sees the fulfilment of his prediction commenced.

Proudhon calculated misery, and knew exactly how long the patience of hunger would endure. He reduced the entire social criticism to a system of double-entry. In all his later writings he keeps a formal account of the economic relations of society, and proves by figures how the balance may be upset, and at what particular point the deficit will be discovered. In his later writings he abandoned his first revolutionary haste and the impetuosity of his earlier works. He who once begins to calculate is quiet.

In gambling-houses, amidst the passionately excited crowd, men are often seen who have already lost all they possess, silently smiling, and pricking in on their cards the winning numbers, as if the mere fact of watching the varying chances of the game in which they can only take a spectator's part had a calming influence upon their over-excited brains. For hours they will thus tranquilly sit and calculate, while by their sides each minute estates and fortunes are being lost, and the victims of ill fortune are frantically rushing away from the scene of their misfortunes. So sat Proudhon in the Conciergerie, whither his revolutionary doctrines had brought him, and coldly worked out the social problem.

He became the book-keeper of human misery. With frightful calmness his figures told him what particular units of humanity would starve. In one of his many pamphlets he reduced the relations of the laborer to the capitalist to a mathematical formula, and brought out the result thus: "The work of the laborers B to L for the capitalist equals 10, and their consumption only 9; in other words, the capitalist has eaten one laborer."

On another occasion he said: "For nearly ten years I have not ceased calling out to property, 'Thou art the god not only of murder, but of suicide'; and in return the capitalists, half ruined, and the sophists, cry, 'Down with him!' But 'Down with him!' means, in times of revolution, 'Strike him dead!' Come now, you journalists of property; come, theologians with the biblical jargon; philosophers, moralists, jurists, publicists, ideologists, with your mystical gibberish; economists with the double tongue, and if you will kill me with the first salvo, I will say to you with my last breath, 'Before you speak of property, go, all of you, to M. Hippolyte Vannier, 15 Rue de Rambuteau, and take a lesson in book-keeping. Until then you are all only liars and cowards.'"

This is quite the obstinate tone of a book-keeper whose accounts are contested. Such a reply might an astrologer, who from his observation of the heavenly bodies had calculated the future, have given to one who doubted the accuracy of the horoscope. Just as obscurely does he cry aloud to his friends in his "Confessions d'un Révolutionnaire," "Study a Revolution. Learn to comprehend it." Like an augur he examines the entrails, and from them foretells what is to come.

In the camp of the Economists stands the mysterious form of Malthus calculating the necessity of misery; and in the opposite camp of the Socialists stands Proudhon, and calculates to the laborers whence comes starvation. Malthus, in gloomy resignation, closes his book and says, "The guests on earth exceed the number of plates laid for them, and there is no remedy against starvation."

Proudhon was the mathematical antagonist of Malthus; he introduces other elements in his calculations, and arrives at other results. Malthus began to calculate during the first French Revolution, and was scared by the bloodshed; and Proudhon continued the calculations during the revolution of February. Both are hermits amidst the crowd of the age; and as Archimedes cried out to the invading soldiers, "Do not touch my circle," so they stand brooding apart from the combatants, and each believes himself to have solved the problem of society.

Proudhon stands tragically and completely apart from his age. His pathos cannot be doubted; we can never for an instant question that it is fire which burns within him. Every firm conviction is a species of madness; and in Proudhon's every word the intensest conviction is present. Every sentence comes from his soul, and we even seem to see his fiery breath. Once he wrote, "The writer of these lines must believe that at this moment the world is mad." He concluded another of his peculiar desponding articles with the following words: "Accursed be my contemporaries! Only those minds who do not understand the unhappiness and the loneliness of my genius can mistake these sharp words. Unspoken they are the culminating points of every soul — which negates."

He stands amidst ruins and rejoices. He lies down amidst the corpses of the age in order that he may revel in the full flood of life within him. He is the Nero of literature, who sings whilst the great fire is burning. He places as a motto to one of his books, "*Levabo ad cœlum manum meam et dicam: Vivo ego in æternum.*" Proudhon feels in his veins the life-blood of the next century, therefore he shouts aloud as one drunken with vitality. He is Lot escaping from the doomed Sodom. Proudhon is the revolution embodied and conscious of its own wants: in him revolution for the first time found its logic. He meets us with a cold, incisive logic, a guillotine of words, a Bastille-storming, fear-inspiring logic; a logic before which lord high chamberlains tremble; a logic from which capital finds no lurking-places; a logic which tears away the shirt from modern society, and which washes off the paint. His speech is of the revolution — bold, hasty, overwhelming, crushing, lightning and thunder in one. Proudhon is a German Frenchman. He writes with a deep-thinking German intellect, and a French power of execution. There is something of the Puritan element in his development. One sees in him the sword and the Bible, while ever and anon the upstart, the self-educated man, is present.

Proudhon annihilated all authority; he reduces the State to its component parts; he leads capital back to his starting-point; he kills money by its own mother — barter; he compels the power of the people to take the initiative; he destroys the right to be idle; he storms heaven and transforms earth. He was to be feared. We might love him or we might hate him, but no one could laugh at him. When he read his financial scheme to the Constituent Assembly, and it was received with general laughter, he said coldly, standing placidly amidst the unexampled tumult raging around him, "Citizens, I regret that my words should so excite your laughter, since that which I say will kill you."

In those words rang out from the tribune, for the first time in the history of the educated world, the sharp voice of the proletariat, clearly and precisely, addressing its demands to society. Then it was that Proudhon felt his mission; and when he was interrupted by a question as to whom his speech was addressed, he replied, "Since I use the two pronouns 'we' and 'you,' it is clear that at this moment I personify myself with the proletariat, and you with the middle class."

Thus Proudhon placed himself outside the pale of society, and at war with it. Inexorably he pointed out the social contradictions he had in view, when on this occasion he declared, "The income-tax is called a robbery: what shall we say to the taxation of labor? That can only be called murder." Thereupon he began to calculate. He calculated the economy of society, and he calculated until the Assembly was frightened. And as a tyrant drowns by beat of drum the last words of one condemned to death, so did the members drown his voice by tumultuous noises, and prevent him finishing his speech. But in vain. Proudhon's voice grew ever louder and louder; his speech was firm and distinct, and his words sound farther and farther, and will yet be long heard.

When Proudhon was a prisoner in the Conciergerie, the upper and middle classes read the pamphlets and newspapers he issued from his cell. They looked upon him as one looks upon a wild beast in a cage. He affected, in order to obtain a hearing, the air of one who wished to confess his sins, and he called his work "The Confessions of a Revolutionist"; and we might have believed we were about to hear the words of a penitent sinner when he commenced with these words, "I will explain the motives of all my actions, and confess all my faults; and if in so doing a bold word, a hasty thought, should escape my pen, pardon me as you would a humbled sinner."

With these words he entered the confessional, and then shrieked out the most horrible tales into the ears of his father-confessor. Who was this man who thus affrighted the French middle class? A short review of his writings will tell us who he was.

In his controversy with Louis Blanc, he declared that the Revolution of the nineteenth century had a twofold object. Economically, the first object was the amalgamation of the laborer and the capitalist by the democratization of credit, the annihilation of interest on capital, and the transformation of all commercial transactions which have for their object the means of labor and production. In this connection there existed only two parties in France — that of labor and of capital. Politically, the second object was to merge the State in society — *i. e.*, the cessation of all authority, and the suppression of the entire machinery of Government by the abolition of taxation, the simplification of the administrative arrangements, or, in other words, by the organization of universal suffrage. From this point of view he saw in France only two parties — the party of liberty and the party of Government. Proudhon, therefore, laid down the following proposition as the formula of his political and economical system: Abolition of the economical exhaustion of man by man, and abolition of the government of man by man. In this double direction run all the propositions of Proudhon: on the one side, towards the abolition of interest and the introduction of gratuitous credit; on the other side, towards the suppression of taxation, and, as a natural corollary, the extinction of Government.

According to his views, the abolition of State and capital depends each upon the other. What in politics is called authority is analogous and equivalent to what in political economy is called property. Proudhon can only express the revolutionary idea in its simplicity and grandeur by the word Anarchy: for nations in their nonage, chaos and nothingness; for full-grown peoples, life and light.

This double object of his writings, as well as his attitude towards the Socialist development of France, are most glowingly, passionately, and despairingly described by Proudhon himself in his above-mentioned "*Confessions d'un Révolutionnaire pour servir a l'Histoire de la Révolution de Février.*" He wrote this work in the Conciergerie. It is the writing of a prisoner who holds himself freer than any other person; a victorious shout from one vanquished. He commenced the gloomy diary which he wrote on the walls of his cell with the words: "For the last four months I have observed their triumph, these charlatans of family and property. My eye follows their drunken movements, and at every look, every word that escapes them, I say, 'They are lost.' In the bitterness of my soul I will speak to my fellow citizens. Hear the rebellion of a man who once deceived himself, but who yet was ever true to mankind. May my voice penetrate your ears as the voice of one condemned, as the conscience of a prison."

Proudhon had the destructive power and the solitude of fire. Fire consorts with nothing but itself, and can only extend itself by destruction. How great and fearful is the working of the flame! How it eats through wood and iron! What influence has the doctrine of Proudhon had upon the development of affairs in France! How has he rooted up the tyranny of reaction, and himself in turn tyrannized over his party! From the very commencement of the February revolution, Proudhon in his paper was constantly in advance of all the other Socialistic journals, even of the Mountaineers in the National Assembly, and continually compelled them to follow his lead against their will. The barricades of February were scarcely cleared away, every one was entangled in the vortex of the revolution, when he began his independent course of organization. Every rival preaching Socialism was attacked by him, and he beat them down in order that he might continue the fight alone. The Fourierist school, with Considerant at its head, was annihilated by him; the utter emptiness of Pierre Leroux and the chimerical tendencies of Louis Blanc were equally demolished by him. No one castigated the Provisional Government so unmercifully as he. In him the Mountain found its sharpest critic. The Mountain, which at their banquet of September 22, 1848, had spoken so energetically against Socialism, adopted suddenly, and chiefly in consequence of his compulsion, the Social Democratic Republic as its banner. Similarly the ideas of free credit, a bank of exchange, the abolition of all government, were adopted chiefly through his instrumentality. The union of the proletariat and the middle class was first preached by him despite the abyss which separated them, and which party hatred sought daily to widen. He it was who first urged the Democratic party constitutionally to oppose the reaction, and he did it in those gloomy days when the ardent revolutionists regarded him as one whose doctrines would act as oil upon the troubled waters of the time.

To be continued.

Monopoly Banking in England.

The following letters, which recently appeared in the "Newcastle Daily Chronicle," strikingly exhibit the disastrous effects of governmental interference with banking in England.

To the Editor of the Chronicle:

Sir — I said in my last that the gold wanted in Spain, and now lying unproductive in the vaults of the Bank of England, is not wanted where it is. Yet, according to your correspondence from the Stock Exchange in London, a rate of 6 per cent. for the discount of first-class commercial paper is being imposed on its customers by the directors of the Bank in order to keep the gold where it is. The fact is indisputable.

Now, if the Bank directors had imposed this rate of discount of their own free will, and in the exercise of their judgment as a body of men competent to manage their own affairs, and attending to them as business men, I should hardly venture to find fault with them. They ought to know much better than I can tell them what is proper in that behalf. But that is not their position. They may be brilliant financiers, — and very likely they are, — but in this case they are not allowed to do as they think proper. In their

own parlors or counting-houses they are men; in the Bank parlor, as it is called, they are not entirely machines. They are allowed to sit in judgment on the banking transactions of the Bank. But the Bank of England, according to MacCulloch, is more than a bank; it is a mint. It exercises one of the functions of the Crown in the manufacture of money. Hence, in this function, he says, it is justly controlled by law, administered, of course, by the sovereign power of the Crown. And this array of force destroys the use of their reason in the matter of issuing money beyond a certain limit, leaving them only its use as to the likelihood of that limit being approached. That is to say that, having a road set out before them along which they are to draw the wheels of the vehicle to which they are attached, they may take precautions against a collision with the limits prescribed for them by law; and they must do so, or that collision would frequently take place. They are not altogether like our tram-car men. But they are very nearly so. The rails not being so distinctly laid down as that the wheels must go in a rut, yet, having a very ponderous vehicle to conduct, they must drive as if they were. Hence, there is some room for a nice judgment. But it goes within very small limits. Our legislators may have reasoned thus. A great banking monopoly, in a country where there is an almost entire freedom in every other business, is a dangerous expedient. Hence, it must be carefully hedged in. There is also a great ecclesiastical monopoly in England, where religious thought is free. But it is most rigidly hedged in. The monopolies once admitted, this is the way you must treat them. Well, I do not find fault with the Bank directors. It is the law I have to deal with. The gold is kept in the Bank vaults by law, and the directors are its keepers. When they see it going out too fast, not for the prudential considerations of trade — that would be all right — but for the rigid mechanical limits of the law, they put on what is popularly called "the screw." That is, they raise the rate of discount, and this means, not what even an ordinary rise of price in any other market means, namely, that they think the article they deal in is worth more, but that their customers are not to have so much of it. They must manage somehow without it; anyhow without it, for they can't have it. Sir Robert Peel, in 1844, told the Parliamentary representatives of the nation how much was good for them, and beyond that, even in 1890, they are not to go.

Hence, the law says the gold is wanted in the vaults of the Bank of England. It is wanted to lie there, in order to form the fund from which the notes of the Bank are to be paid when they are presented for the purpose. And, in order that there may never again be such a state of things as prevailed previous to 1818, when the Bank did not pay its notes in coin, but only in paper, — that is, in other bank notes, — a law must be imposed on the Bank forcing it to keep in its vaults gold for the paper it issues. Prudence, of course, dictates a wide margin, and just as that margin fluctuates from day to day, from week to week rather, for the Bank directors in general meet as a court only once a week, so does the Bank of England's discount rise and fall. If 6 per cent. is not enough to stop the drain of gold, 7 must be imposed, and until the Bank's accounts show a return of ease, as it is called, the screw must be kept on; nay, it must be twisted harder and harder until "ease" is obtained. How, then, is this ease obtained? It comes in this way. Commercial operations are reversed. The trader understands perfectly that he must no longer expect the use of money, or the ordinary operation of credit to which he has been accustomed. He must buy no more than he can pay for at the moment. Nay, he must not buy at all. For, as he wants money, all his efforts must be directed towards selling. Hence prices are universally falling. If he should buy today, he knows that tomorrow he will have to sell under the price at which he has bought. The value, not of one article of property, is depressed. All property falls in value, because property ceases to be saleable. Everybody wants to sell. There are no buyers.

Hence it is that your report from the Quayside of November 8 says: "Iron has fallen in price today, coal is very weak, and there is a general reduction in the value of many foreign securities and stocks"; and from London, "Some houses refuse to act at all."

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To the Editor of the Chronicle:

Sir:—You inform us this morning that the public have just escaped a great commercial crisis. I am glad to hear it. We are indeed in luck in this, that the storms at sea have taken the lives of our national protectors together with the vessel which carried them, but have spared the gold on the way from foreign parts, upon the presence of which in the Bank of England the subsistence, and that means the lives of millions, depends.

Now, sir, why should a little gold be of so much consequence? I admit that, whilst we attach so much regard to the possession of that metal, it is not unreasonably of great consequence. I have no quarrel with the metal. Gold was not placed in the bowels of our mother earth to remain there. It has its use, and I, for one, religiously promote its use as the best means of combating its abuse. Its abuse is to neglect it in the earth, or, after having with infinite toil brought it forth, to lock it up by law in a vault. That is what our law does, and the luck upon which we congratulate ourselves this morning is that some more gold has come in to be locked up with the rest that we may not be forced by law to ruin ourselves by selling at all hazards our other property to get it just at this particular moment when it appears Spain happens to want it.

The law enacted in 1844 under Sir Robert Peel's administration is of this sort. A certain fixed sum was taken, upon a calculation then made in regard to the quantity of bank notes in use, for which the Bank of England held certain securities supposed to be permanently good, and the law authorized the Bank to issue notes, without any other security, up to that limit. If the Bank, or rather the public making application to the Bank, should want any more notes than just this exact sum, then the Bank must get or keep gold of an equal value. It matters not one whit that the Bank directors should know exactly where to get that gold, or that they should know exactly when to expect its arrival. They must actually have it, or the screw is put on. Bank notes are always coming in to the Bank; and what the Bank does practically when there is a reduction of the quantity of its gold through the demands of commerce or foreign governments or any other cause, is to stop bank notes from going out by raising the rate of discount. It refuses the use of its money. Hence the stoppage of trade; hence the sales of property. The Stock Exchange feels it first, because the most easily saleable article is that which the Stock Exchange deals in. But the Corn Exchange feels it also. Buyers hold off. Sellers become pressing. Mincing Lane sale rooms feel it. The auctioneers of tea, coffee, sugar, fruit, gums, drugs, spices, etc., etc., feel it next. Bidders are dumb. The Liverpool cotton market feels it. Men go about in vain with samples. The Coal Exchange feels it. Cargoes don't sell. The collieries feel it. The output must be limited. Pitmen feel it. The coals fill the trucks, but the trucks remain in the sidings. There are no ships in the docks to take them off. Everybody feels it, one way or another, sooner or later. For the present, it appears, the mischief is put off. Some gold has come from abroad. The Bank directors can maintain their obedience to the law this time without going beyond six per cent., and we are saved. Happy people, whom the timely arrival of a few bags of coin can save from infinite sorrow.

Bear with me a moment, sir, whilst I offer you another illustration of our happy condition. Scotland is a country where, by a certain historic provision of law, the Bank of England is not the supreme screw-driver which it is in England by law. But in 1845 Sir Robert Peel took care to apply to Scotland the same kind of legal provision which he had imposed on England the year before. The banks in Scotland — there are about a dozen of them, not one of them but was instituted previous to 1845, for the law has made a new bank there an impossibility — the banks in Scotland require, every year about harvest time, to issue a good many more notes than at any other time. Knowing this perfectly well beforehand, they send to London, to the Bank of England, for gold, so as to be ready beforehand with a legal warrant for the extra notes their customers require. These notes all come back within a few months at the outside, and, whilst they are coming in, the banks send back the gold as they can spare it This process modifies from day to day the situation of the Bank of England. If circumstances require it, "the screw" must be put on to force the whole trade of Britain into narrower limits, because the harvest people in Scotland are carrying notes in their pockets!

Yours, etc., INDEX.

NEWCASTLE, NOVEMBER 13, 1890.

Beauties of Government.

[Clippings from the Press.]

There was rejoicing in the collector's office at the Boston custom house recently. A brand-new-latest-edition of Webster's dictionary had arrived. This may seem to the uninitiated a very little thing, but the acquisition was bound all over with red tape, and was obtained only after an official correspondence.

1858-1890—these dates mark the latest dictionary and its immediate predecessor at this office.

When Col. Olin discovered that there was none later than 1858, he wrote the department requesting permission to purchase a new one. The reply came in due season to get competitive bids. Competitive bids for Webster's dictionary! Noah Webster must have turned in his coffin from excitement at the thought then of Boston's largest booksellers eagerly bidding for the privilege of furnishing at the same price his dictionary to the Boston Custom House! At last the bids were in and formally forwarded to Washington. Finally permission was obtained to purchase the dictionary.

This is not so ludicrous as the disallowance of the accounts of a southern collector, who, to save a warehouse, stored with valuable goods, from destruction by fire, hired for $50 a tug that was lying near by. When he forwarded his accounts, accompanied by vouchers, this item was disallowed, and he was gravely informed that, according to section and chapter so-and-so, such service should have been advertised for thirty days in advance. A special bill in Congress was necessary for his relief. Red tape binds like bands of steel.

Once every year the city of Boston sells at auction all the real estate upon which the taxes for the year remain unpaid. The sales are always closed out inside of two hours, and as the public knows very little about them, notwithstanding the fact that they are officially advertised, the attendance is composed of holders of mortgages and equities interested in protecting their property, and others who purchase tax titles for investment, the tax title underlying all other claims. The collector only looks to obtaining an amount sufficient to satisfy the claim of the city, which is the taxes, legal costs and interest to the day of sale. The sale is conditional. When a piece of real estate has been knocked off to you by the auctioneer (and it may be a house and 5,000 feet of improved land for only $6), you pay that amount to the city, but the title is not perfected for two years. The owner has that time in which to redeem it. He has to pay you back your money with interest, charges, and must pay all accrued taxes. He must settle all claims for improvements; all assessments of the city for sewers, streets, and sidewalks, and whatever other costs for public betterments stand against the estate. Upon paying the tax-title money the purchaser may take possession immediately.

WASHINGTON. The question is often asked, "How much does Uncle Sam pay for his public buildings?" This is not easily answered, unless by the reply that he pays much more than other people would for the same class of work. For instance, the Chicago Custom House has cost in round numbers $5,000,000, and now somebody says it is about to fall down. But, in truth, the Government in this day has no limit. In former times, when a custom-house was wanted in a small town, the Secretary of the Treasury bought a business building of private parties adequate to the needs of the service, or else built one of a similar kind at an expense of a few thousand dollars. Now nothing less than a $50,000 structure goes, even though the architectural display is to be made for a country post-office at some country cross-roads town. The Postmaster-General told me that Congress makes provision for imposing public buildings in some towns, where the Department deems it hardly worth while to pay a small rent. It might be added that this abuse has grown so great that Congress did, at the last session, reduce the limit for such places to about $35,000. From this figure there is a rapid rise, with no precise scale, every town grabbing as much as it can get, to about $9,000,000, the cost of the New York Post Office and Court House. This New York building proved more costly than any public building in Washington, except the Capitol and State, war, and navy buildings; twice as much as the Patent Office or Post Office, and one and a half times as much as the United States Treasury building. The Capitol and State, war, and navy buildings each cost a couple of millions more. Next to New York, the costliest public building in the country, of course outside of Washington, is the St. Louis Custom House, which took $1,000,000 more than the Chicago Government property — another evidence of Congressional prodigality at cross-roads towns.

The British naval department is simply a sieve through which the money runs. Thus, for Admiralty messengers alone, no less than £11,177 a year is paid. A striking instance of the internal mismanagement of the Admiralty is shown in the evidence of Mr. Cox, one of the two principal clerks in the Accountant-General's department, before the Royal Commission, which recently reported. Mr. Cox's salary was £900 a year, but he found that he had practically nothing to do. This extraordinary man pointed out to his superior that he was receiving public money without having any duties. The superior told him to mind his own business, and Mr. Cox consequently continued for another year enjoying his sinecures. Then, "feeling," as he said, "so strongly that the Government money was being wasted," he renewed his protest. "I was again snubbed," he told the Royal Commission. In the end arrangements were made for the retirement of Mr. Cox on a pension. Take another instance. Sir Gerald Fitzgerald was appointed Accountant-General at a salary of £1,500 a year, by the Coercionist Lord Northbrook, although he had no previous experience at the Admiralty. In this department the superintending staff costs £27,730 a year, while, actually, the persons superintended cost only £23,950 a year! Sir Gerald Fitzgerald, asked if he considered this a proper distribution of forces, was obliged to say, "I should say not," and the taxpayers will agree with him. Let it be always remembered that for the abovementioned evils the aristocratic Lord George Hamilton, who knows nothing whatever about the navy, is personally responsible. The scandal of the "reorganization" of the public service is the purest piece of jobbery and bribery. The classes first stick their sons into the best paid, and least worked, departments of the Admiralty. In two or three years, Lord George Hamilton and his colleagues pretend that for the sake of economy the number of clerks in a principal department should be reduced, and the department "reorganized." The result is that men, varying in age from twenty-one to forty, retire in the prime of life, upon salaries ranging from £200 to £700 a year, with a bonus, in addition, ascending from £500 to £1,000. Immediately after the department is "reorganized," a fresh batch of appointments is made, and in a few years another "reorganization" takes place. It is the purest swindle upon the tax-payers.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

The Question of Copyright.

Rev. M. A. Kelsey, of Hart, Mich., writing in the "Voice," asks "as to the moral difference between a time limitation and a territorial limitation. Why, if it is just to say to an author, your right to the control of your production shall be limited to a term of years, is it not just to say, your right shall also be limited to certain territory?" Mr. Kelsey has anticipated me. It has been my intention for several weeks to make this very point against international copyright. Possibly the argument is not a new one, but it seems to me decisive when addressed to those friends of copyright who think it would be unjust to make the monopoly perpetual, but on the other hand deem it unjust not to make it international. Of course it has no force against those who favor a perpetual monopoly of ideas, but their position is so excessively silly that against it no force is required. Believers in a time limit to copyright may answer that all who benefit by an author's works should be taxed alike to remunerate him. But if that is so, why free the succeeding generation from this tax? And if the rejoinder shall come that the succeeding generation will have its own authors to remunerate, this will again be met by the consideration that so has each nation its own authors to remunerate. If, according to the famous saying of Alphonse Karr, "literary property is a property," then there is no just limit to it, either in time or in space; but if, according to men wiser than Karr though not as witty, it is not a property, but simply a legal device to secure adequate remuneration of authors, then any limit is just, whether of time or space or both, which accomplishes the end.

So far I have been arguing the case of national copyright against international copyright; but for my own part I can favor neither. Copyright, in any form and under any limitation, is an injustice. Not, however, for the reason given by Mr. Pentecost, who acknowledges literary property and says that copyright is unjust only because it is enforced by officials paid from a treasury filled by compulsory taxation. This is very much as if he were to say that, though it is unjust to keep people off vacant land without the aid of the State, it would be perfectly just to keep them off by hired Pinkerton men. Compulsory taxation adds an extra injustice to everything that it touches, but it is not always the only injustice; in the matter of copyright, as in the matter of land, there is a question of equity that is independent of compulsory taxation. Just as land is the raw material of nature's visible realm, so ideas may be said to be the raw material of nature's invisible realm, and there is no more justification for the claim of the discoverer of an idea to exclusive use of it than there would have been for a claim on the part of the man who first "struck oil" to ownership of the entire oil region or petroleum product. When Mr. Pentecost becomes a "vacant lander" in the realm of thought and literature, he will be able to treat the copyright question intelligently; but, when he discusses the matter from his present standpoint, he gives his case completely away. The central injustice of copyright and patent law is that it compels the race to pay an individual through a long term of years a monopoly price for knowledge that he has discovered today, although some other man or men might, and in many cases very probably would, have discovered it tomorrow.

This view of copyright will not win the assent of the people for a very long time. Copyright is one of the most difficult problems of political economy, and the idea involved in its true solution is too subtle to be promptly grasped by people or politicians. It stands at great disadvantage beside the captivating simplicity of Alphonse Karr's proposition that "literary property is a property" and beside the plausible pharisaic morality of the proclamation of the Godkins and the Gilders that all who deny it are thieves. These people have just won a victory in the passage of the international copyright bill, and it is my opinion that they will win others before they are finally overthrown. But they really ought to be more polite, for the thieving is on their side. This new bill is simply a big steal. The claim is that it will benefit American authors and American literature and the American people, but it will do nothing of the kind. Those whom it will really benefit are those foreign authors who are already overpaid and will now get doubly paid, and still more the larger and older American publishing houses who have seen their palmy days of big profits very properly vanish in face of the competition of the "pirates." These publishers, by using American authors as catspaws and by taking American printers into the steal, have finally accomplished their design, and the sufferers will be the American people, who will gradually be deprived of their cheap literature. The international copyright bill is simply another manifestation of McKinleyism.

I recommend those who claim that the idea of literary property advances with liberty and civilization to study the following table showing the term of copyright in the different countries of the world.

Mexico, Guatemala, and Venezuela, perpetual.

Colombia and Spain, author's life and eighty years after.

Ecuador, Peru, Tunis, Russia, Norway, and Belgium, author's life and fifty years after.

Hayti, author's life, widow's life, children's lives, and twenty years after the close of the latest period.

Italy, author's life and forty years after; eighty years in any event.

France, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, author's life and thirty years after.

Brazil, Sweden, and Roumania, author's life and ten years after.

South Africa, author's life; fifty years in any event.

Denmark and Holland, fifty years.

Japan, author's life and five years after.

Bolivia, author's life.

Great Britain, author's life and seven years after; forty-two years in any event.

United States, twenty-eight years, with right of extension for fourteen more.

From this table it would be almost justifiable to frame the law that the length of the term of copyright in a nation is inversely proportional to the height of its civilization.

T.

Methods and Results.

While beneficiaries of monopoly and privilege vulgarly celebrate the glories of what they call triumphant democracy, and while ignorant quacks like Gronlund and Bellamy congratulate their dupes on the present tendencies toward a state of slavery and darkness which to them appears a state of ideal social existence, it must be manifest to intelligent observers that this country has really passed through a century of political, social, and industrial retrogression and that it is decaying at an amazingly rapid rate. It needs but to glance at the kind of legislation which our rulers, from aldermen up to congressmen, are assiduously inflicting upon us, and at the kind of people in whose hands power is being more and more concentrated, to perceive how different our governments are, in all respects, from those contemplated by the founders of this Union, who fondly imagined that the government they were building up could and would secure the blessings of liberty and peace to the citizens. Our present rulers act upon the belief that governments are instituted for the purpose of enslaving and impoverishing and corrupting the people. The industrial and social conditions of the country plainly testify to the venality and incompetence of the government. Government is directly responsible for the existence of millionaires and tramps, arrogant employers and violent strikers, paupers and prostitutes, suicides and criminals. But for the land, money, and other legislation of our rulers, this country at least would be free from nine-tenths of its poverty and misery.

Melancholy as the present situation is, the task of remedying and improving it would not be found a discouragingly difficult one if only a considerable number of intelligent citizens once arrived at a general agreement as to the needful measures and proper methods of reform. In fact, agreement on the question of methods is not essential, albeit supremely desirable. Mere theoretical agreement, were it but widely extended and unconfined to unpopular groups of radicals, might force the government to yield up without an actual struggle most of the ground which it is now suffered to occupy to the great injury of the people. It is only because such an overwhelming opposition to the most objectionable features of government is not within the range of probability that the radical element must be prepared to make up in the quality of their methods what they certainly will lack in quantity when the hour for decisive action strikes.

But it is well to realize the fact that the progress of truth and reform, even if sure, is very slow and by no means steady. While there seems to be overwhelming evidence in favor of the view that humanity must and will proceed in the right direction, there is no reason to suppose that we are guaranteed against temporary relapses and periods of stagnation. We may have to pass through another century of reaction and retrogression, and witness some extraordinary developments in political and social and industrial relations before the forces of progress begin to assert themselves in practical life and to mould institutions in conformity with the generalizations of social science. There is abundant reason to think that we are very far from the time which will mark the turning point in the career of governmentalism, notwithstanding the increasing signs of popular discontent. Certainly the Anarchists and Individualists can find little comfort in the activity of the "new political forces," from which so much is expected in some quarters. Not that we hesitate to admit that much may really be expected from them; but in the way of evil rather than in the way of improvement will, in our opinion, that activity display itself.

These considerations, I say, it is well to bear in mind, for they guard us against certain untenable positions and impracticable conclusions which our earnestness and valor might tempt us to jump at. Because some of our Anarchistic allies are losing sight of the difference between the abstract and the concrete, the ultimate and the initial, the absolute and the relative, and are led into grave errors and misrepresentations of Anarchism, it is of the highest importance that it be made clear just what we promise, demand, profess, as well as what we do not. We do not hold out hopes of a speedy deliverance and sudden emancipation. We do not, like religious enthusiasts, ask people to seek salvation in perfect obedience to the truth as we see it and pay no heed to the surroundings. We do not demand from anybody the carrying out of "the perfect law," and we do not profess to be holier and purer than others. We do not offer to the sufferers any specifics with which they can at once proceed to heal themselves. We are not free from disease ourselves and we do not undertake to cure anybody. We readily admit our incapacity for treating individual cases. When Mr. Pentecost declares that Anarchism is to be reached through personal virtue and individual sacrifices, he misrepresents the Anarchistic view; and when critics successfully confute

him, it is not Anarchistic reform which they overthrow, but notions entirely peculiar to Mr. Pentecost. For my part, I repudiate, with most Anarchists, the new version of the old "be-good-and-you'll-be-happy" gospel as a thing wholly composed of emotional ingredients, with no trace of thought to give it definiteness and force.

Anarchism is a politico-economic doctrine, which (at least partially) must be made the basis of political and economic relations *in order* to give individuals opportunities for intellectual and moral development. Under present unfavorable conditions sacrifice can result in no benefit, but must remain sacrifice, — that is, pure loss and waste. Under favorable conditions no sacrifice will be required. Sensible people know better than to expect a miraculous conversion of the powerful, such as would impel them to surrender their privileges and devote themselves to ethical culture. The few people who might be persuaded to sin no more are the very people whose sinning can be rendered more serviceable to progress than all the private virtues are.

Rational Anarchists do not concern themselves with questions of private conduct; nor do they discourage attempts at temporary material improvement on the part of those who are oppressed by the prevailing system. Labor organizations will never achieve justice to labor by the means now in vogue; yet no rational Anarchist would advise them to disband and desist from all efforts to better their condition. Coöperative homes may prove advantageous to individuals, and may be recommended despite the certainty that therein does not lie the solution of any very pressing modern problem. And so throughout. It is a silly and preposterous notion that, because Anarchists entertain decided views with regard to the deepest questions of human progress, they are to give no thought to the morrow, but become fanatical imitators of religious cranks, who think of nothing but salvation, apostles in rags, unwashed, homeless wanderers. Yet this is the logic of the position that reform should begin at home!

Reform must begin, not at home, but in the market, in the labor and money market. To tell the workingmen that the labor problem will be solved by their refusing to take interest on their savings and rent for their land is to make one's self a proper subject for ridicule. What the workingmen and small struggling employers must be told is that certain economic reforms would kill the usurious powers of capitalists and put an end to exploitation of man by man. What the starving Irish tenant must be told is that by a proper method of resistance it is possible for him to defy the robber-landlord and keep the lion's share of his product, now abstracted under various pretences from him, in his own pocket. Anarchists must tell the laborer, the farmer, the small merchant, that legal privilege and artificial monopoly are the cause of their hardships, and that economic liberty alone can lift them into a position where the fruits of their skill and toil will be theirs to enjoy, and where the only suffering they will be condemned to endure will be that resulting from personal faults. Those Anarchists who conduct themselves thus, who understand the needs of the hour and the language of their contemporaries, do all that it is possible for them to do. If they are listened to and followed — well; if not, well also, though not *so* well. Whatever tendencies prevail, each of us will have done his share and will have contributed his influence. In the end the right view must obtain supremacy. But those Anarchists whose talk stands in no discoverable relation to time, place, and circumstances, who fail to distinguish between narrow, false opportunism and wise, philosophical opportunism; between short-sighted expediency and broad expediency; between absolute and ultimate principles, and relative, concrete truths, — those cannot even justly claim the merit of intelligent and well-directed effort in behalf of their cause. Whether the cause which they try to serve in their peculiar fashion fails or succeeds, *they* will not have contributed any influence at all: they will have wasted their energies to no purpose.

Let us, then, in working for progress, take care that we really work in a way which promises to promote the factors of progress and be, in the true sense of the word, practical. Convinced of the soundness of our doctrines, let us also assure ourselves that our methods are such as will answer and serve the purposes in view. *All* ways do not lead to the goal, but some may. These let us follow.

And let no one be disquieted at the thought that, in spite of our struggles, slavery may be our lot instead of freedom, darkness instead of light. After all, we do not work for the future and in expectation of palpable results. Those results are desirable, and no chances should be thrown away; but we fight because therein lies our peace and contentment, because fight we must, because daily, hourly, are we thus impelled to struggle. Not to fight would mean not to live out our individual nature, not to be what we are; and this is impossible. V. Y.

A Significant Movement.

A remarkable gathering took place recently at University College, London, at which were discussed proposals for the foundation of an Economic Association and, in conjunction therewith, of an economic journal. The English Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Goschen, presided, and many prominent economists, statisticians, professors, and sociologists were present and took part in the proceedings. The first resolution, to the effect that it was expedient to form an association for the advancement of economic knowledge by the issue of a journal and such other means as the Association might from time to time agree to adopt, was moved by Prof. Marshall and seconded by the economist and statistician Giffen. Prof. Marshall said [I quote the report of the London "Times"] that the reason why he was put forward to speak first on the subject was the accident that he happened to be in the chair in Section F of the British Association in that particular year in which the movement, which had long been maturing, was at last ripened. A great number of circulars was sent out and they had had no answer from any one to the effect that the time was not ripe. No single economist had refused help, and almost every one had promised help. He was not one of those who thought that they should have started this movement very long ago. It was remarkable that England was in these matters behind other countries. This state of things was due to sad accident. Although England in 1870 had a stronger array of economists than any other country — not more learned, but more full of creative power — within a few years the greater number of them were dead, four in particular in the very prime of life. He spoke of Cairnes, Jevons, Bagehot, and Cliffe Leslie, who for originality were men in the first rank. Thus, though in 1870 England was remarkably strong, in 1880 she was remarkably weak in economists of mark. Happily, however, in 1890 the remarkable feature was that we had a very large number of very able young men at Oxford, Cambridge, and elsewhere; a large number of men who were just at the age at which papers such as could be published in a journal might be expected to be written. . . . Besides that he had received a great number of suggestions from persons who were not economists, most of whom expressed the hope that the proposed association would exert "a wholesome influence." That was the one thing which he hoped they would not do. Their desire was not to exert "a wholesome influence"; because that involved their first finding out what were the true doctrines and then making everybody agree to them. Now, economics was a science, and an orthodox science was a contradiction in terms. Science could be true or false, but could not be orthodox; and the only way to find out what was true was to welcome the criticisms of people who knew what they were talking about. In that way he did hope they would exercise a wholesome influence on the character of economic discussion. . . . . One influence he hoped they would exercise would be that they would start from an absolutely catholic basis, and include every school of economists which was doing genuine work. He trusted that those who should control this journal would insist that all who wrote in criticism of others should take the writings of those others in the best possible sense; and in that way all schools might work amicably together, interpreting each other in the fairest and most generous manner. Acting on that principle they would make great progress.

The resolution was also supported by the chairman and other influential speakers, and was unanimously carried. Mr. Courtney, M. P., proposed the second resolution, "that any person who desires to further the aims of the association, and is approved by the council, be admitted to membership; and that the annual subscription be fixed for the present at one guinea." In defending it, he said there were two or three words in it which apparently were not quite consistent with the catholicity which Professor Marshall had rightly demanded as the prime characteristic of the association. Persons were required not only to desire to further the aims of the association, but to be approved by the council before they could be admitted to membership. Probably some gentlemen present would like to have these words omitted. He had some doubt himself whether they were of any avail and should not object to their omission. But there must be some limitation, and it was necessary occasionally to exercise a little authority if they were going to conduct their business in a satisfactory manner. There were some things which must be taken to be finally fixed, and just as a mathematical journal would exclude contributions which affected to square the circle, so in the science with which they were then concerned there were some propositions for which they would scarcely be able to find room. They might, for example, discuss whether gold alone, or silver alone, or an amalgam of both should be the basis of our currency; but if a gentleman suggested that an unlimited supply of paper would cover all the difficulties of the world, Professor Marshall would say that there must be authority somewhere, and that some opinions must be excluded. There was a sense in which, notwithstanding what Mr. Marshall had said, he hoped the association would exercise a wholesome influence. If a person started in life with the intention of exercising a wholesome influence he would be a horrid creature. But if a man did not exercise a wholesome influence he would be a failure. Without of set purpose and determination attempting to exercise a wholesome influence, he trusted that the association would really do so, not so much by laying down certain canons of doctrine as by showing how in a strenuous way to deal with political problems. If it gave examples of really hard thinking, it must lead persons to some conclusions which might or might not be right, but which would impress those who read their contributions with the conviction that there was a right and a wrong way of working at political problems. He believed that by the careful analysis of such problems a synthesis might be found, though it might not be susceptible of expression in a complete formula. He looked to this association and the journal which they hoped to found as calculated to lead to a right method of study and to discourage by its example the slipshod treatment of these questions which was found too often both in the orthodox and unorthodox political economists.

Mr. Courtney's resolution was adopted.

To people conversant with the history of political economy, who have thought upon the relation between the present condition of economic discussion and the recent developments in the industrial and political spheres, this movement is full of significance. I scarcely need offer here any comments of my own for the purpose of bringing into fuller relief the importance of this movement, as I have (in anticipation of it, as it were) expressed my ideas on the subject in my lecture on "Individualism and Political Economy." But it will not be amiss to reproduce here some passages from the leader which the London "Times" devoted to the meeting, passages which show (to my surprise) that the lessons of recent events in life and literature have not been lost on that conservative organ.

The "Times" says:

The marvel is — and no speaker yesterday satisfactorily explained the fact — that the things now proposed have been so long left undone — left undone until people have begun to doubt whether a science of political economy really

exists. To the age of faith, when men took their doctrines about wages, strikes, and currency from accredited economists, as they took their time from Greenwich, has succeeded a period when all is controverted, when axioms and elementary truths are in dispute, when political economy is a cluster of furiously conducted controversies, and the heretics outnumber the orthodox. To a time when that science exercised a profound influence upon politics has succeeded one in which it has lost confidence and its influence is absolutely *nil*. To some degree the change is unreasonable; it is a new form of the revolt of sentiment against stern, unpalatable truths, the impatience of the idle against Nature's ordinances, of loose thinking against all kinds of clear principles. But there is an element of reason in the change. Economists themselves have changed and are changing. Their science varies from year to year. Very candid were the admissions made yesterday as to the flux, the almost chaotic state, of economical opinion. Mr. Courtney seems to believe that some parts of the teaching of the older economists still stand erect, notwithstanding all the buffeting of modern destructive criticism. But on these matters Mr. Courtney is a little old-fashioned. He still, half furtively, worships at altars which a younger generation would overturn with contumely. What a world of difference between a work on political economy composed by the late Mr. McCulloch and that which is the product of Dr. Wagner and Professor Nasse, to take the last type of Continental works, or Professor Marshall's lately published "Economics"! The former are dogmatic as Euclid; the latter tentative, suggestive, diffident, with no talk about finality. Everywhere we see signs of what the chairman called "the general reconstruction of economic ideas," and the process is by no means completed. More than one speaker yesterday referred to the progress made in economical science in recent years. Activity abounds; if we have not among us original investigators, such as Jevons, Bagehot, and Cairnes, there are plenty of younger men, eager, ingenious, venturesome. Whether distinct progress has been achieved is less certain. Undoubtedly, however, there is a clear recognition of the truth that the problems of the science are infinitely more difficult than was once imagined; that so-called laws, founded solely on observation of one country and time, are of very limited value; that the phenomena of wealth cannot be safely considered apart from other aspects of society; and that the science is still only in its infancy. The naïve confidence of the early economists has given place to a widespread feeling among their successors that their task is only beginning, and that they must stoop to laborious, painful researches which the older economists thought could be superseded by acute analysis and unimpeachable definitions.

From our report of the proceedings it will be seen that the promoters disclaim all intention of exacting, either from members of the new association or contributors to the journal, adherence to any set of doctrines. The scheme of General Booth, from whom the promoters of the idea seem to have taken hints, is not more vague and elastic. All that will be demanded is a "generous" treatment of the opinions of adversaries. Shades of Ricardo and James Mill! To what pass has political economy come when such is the only common ground, when the only test in use among its disciples is that which might suit Oddfellows or Freemasons! And yet, having regard to the profound divisions among professors of the science, no other resolution was possible. It is disheartening to admit, but the fact is, that in 1890 an economical journal, to command success, must open its pages to advocates of the most diverse doctrines, and seek to unite in one fold monometallists and bimetallists, Malthusians and anti-Malthusians.

What such a journal may do, as more than one speaker pointed out, is to create and keep up a high standard of discussion, and to form a body of educated opinion. The need of this in these times is scarcely to be exaggerated. Here, perhaps here alone, there is positive retrogression. Let those who recall the controversial literature which preceded the repeal of the Corn Laws compare it with modern economical discussions, and say whether the inferiority of the latter is not marked. Soft nutriment is demanded; those who offer something less digestible are branded as hard-hearted pedants. At present no doctrine is too crude or monstrous, if it falls in with some one's interest. On public platforms and in journals people will boldly say, without much fear of the consequences, that in economics two and two make five. In this field downright ignorance and imposture win some of their greatest triumphs; it is the favorite resort of persons who could not touch other themes without being found out. No academy or journal will eradicate the economic impostor, the fluent vender of sophisms, the charlatan who passes as the current coin of science what are really the products of his own egotism or the interests of his class. But an association, or journal conducted according to the lines sketched last night, may do something to teach people to take the measure of pretenders. Professor Marshall is afraid that it may be supposed that the association intends to exercise "a wholesome influence." He need not be apprehensive on this score. We do not expect too much. But the association may, without being over-righteous, at least show people how such problems are discussed by trained investigators, and may help to set up a standard, to which men must conform on pain of being refused a hearing. It is not Utopian to anticipate a time when some doctrines openly taught in these days will be regarded as little more reasonable than the wildest utterances of astrology. Never was there a time when sound ideas as to economical questions were more needed. Everywhere they are fiercely discussed. Politics and economics, if ever they could be kept apart, now touch each other at a thousand points. The controversies on which every citizen must take a side go down to the very foundations of economics. In these days you cannot choose whether you will be an economist; you must be so, foolishly or wisely, sophistically or ingenuously.

V. Y.

Dynamic Solutions of Natural Monopoly.

Almost every one who argues for freedom has heard the objection "that some things are in their very nature monopolies and can never be left free from State control, because of the power it would give individuals to absorb wealth they did not create." This idea is so firmly imbedded in the minds of many intelligent men that to dispel it is to remove the barrier which prevents them from accepting Anarchism. Viewed from a purely statical point, it does seem that these objections are perfectly valid, and that the performance of some social functions must be interfered with by the collectivity. But drawing conclusions without fully considering the forces which produce social equilibrium is to ape the old woman who suggests a remedy for every organic disorder. In order to be able to judge even approximately of social correctives, the subject must be viewed dynamically. Before the State is called in to maintain equal opportunities, it must first be shown that the forces inherent in society are insufficient to preserve them. I maintain that they are all-sufficient; and that governmental attempts to create equality are destructive of the very forces which produce equality. Even today, whenever men are endowed with State-created privileges, there is a tendency to destroy their power of extortion by the devising of new methods with which the same want may be satisfied. How much more effective this principle would become, were these privileges destroyed! . . . Whatever advantage remained would be so fluctuating as to become readily dissipated in the increased facility with which society could adapt itself to changes of environment.

At one period the performance of a particular social function may be more advantageous than at another, and *vice versa*. To illustrate: Before the introduction of gas and electricity, oil was principally used for illuminating purposes. Those who performed the function of supplying oil absorbed only a normal amount of values; the industry was individualized, so to speak. Today other modes of illumination have displaced oil to a great extent. The laying of pipes and wires tends to make it an exclusive industry, and, therefore, a "natural monopoly." Experiments of inventors, however, indicate the individualization of illumination in the near future. . . . The modes of transportation have undergone a change within the last century. Who knows that it will not assume a different character in the near future? To say that it will not is to lay claim to a knowledge of the possibilities of time to come.

So it is with all industries which seem to possess the elements of permanent advantage. The broad-gauged view, therefore, suggests the opinion that economic equilibrium is best effected by stripping industry of its legalized prerogatives, relying upon the inventive faculty to destroy undue advantages as they present themselves.

WM. TRINKAUS.

An Anarchistic Editorial.

The following article from the pen of J. Whidden Graham appeared as a signed editorial in the Boston "Sunday Globe" of November 30. It is the first editorial advocacy of Anarchistic views of finance that I remember to have seen in any American daily paper except the Galveston "News":

The frequent commercial panics like that recently experienced in the Argentine Republic; the persistent agitation in the Western States for the free coinage of silver; the subtreasury scheme which is being advocated by the two million members of the Farmers' Alliance; Senator Stanford's bill, introduced at the last session of Congress, providing for government loans of money on real estate security; the late stringency in New York, are all indications of a widespread dissatisfaction with the financial systems of the civilized countries of the world. Where such discontent exists, it is reasonable to assume a cause for it, and I will endeavor to point out some of the reasons which operate injuriously to restrict the supply of currency, and to suggest a remedy for the universally admitted evils of the present system.

And, first, it becomes necessary to distinguish between those who, deceived by the fallacy that money is wealth, ask the government to issue an irredeemable paper currency, and those who see in the imperfections of our existing system evidence that the collective wisdom of legislators has not yet been equal to the task of providing a cheap, secure, and abundant supply of money. The former class is represented in this country by the "Greenbackers," who were once sufficiently numerous to influence politics in several States, but they are not now of any importance. The second class is composed of several conflicting elements, among others those advocating free coinage of silver; those who wish for an extension of the national bank system; and those who desire the abolition of the ten per cent. tax now levied on money other than that issued through the government.

Writing some 150 years ago, David Hume recorded his observations on the beneficial results of an increase in money in these words: "Accordingly we find that in every country into which money begins to flow in greater abundance than formerly, everything takes a new face; labor and industry gain life; the merchant becomes more enterprising; the manufacturer more diligent and skilful, and even the farmer follows the plough with greater alacrity and attention." That this is equally true at this day no one will attempt to deny, and therefore any method by which an increase of money can safely be obtained, merits the support of all who wish to make their country more prosperous.

When H. M. Stanley set out on his hazardous search for Emin Bey, he did not take with him gold, silver, or bank notes, wherewith to pay his native assistants. Having learned that wire of certain dimensions and calico cloth were readily accepted in all parts of Africa through which he would pass, he naturally supplied himself with a stock of those articles. In all uncivilized countries all trade is barter; among a more enlightened people money in the form of pieces of metal seems to facilitate exchanges; and in countries where modern civilization prevails paper money, calculated in terms of gold and based on property of various kinds, has been found to fulfil all the purpose of a medium of exchange. It would seem, then, that the amount of money would be only limited by the value of all the property in this country, and this would be so did not the government restrict the issuing of money to itself, to the owners of a certain form of property (gold and silver) who should deposit it in the United States Treasury, and to the owners of these metals who may organize national banks and purchase United States bonds.

The experience of the past twenty years has shown that the entire amount of gold and silver in existence is insufficient to meet the demands of trade, and the result has been that the use of bank checks, drafts, and other forms of credit has been necessary to lessen the dangers of a contracted currency. As these various substitutes for money become more generally used, they will furnish large firms and corporations with a convenient form of exchange, but the saving will not be great enough to warrant the public in depending on the present volume of currency. The near approach of the time when the notes issued by national banks will be withdrawn, because of the payment of the bonds by which they are secured, has led those desiring a larger issue of money to advocate the adoption of the Scotch system of banking, and the abolition of the tax on notes issued by private banks. They claim that that system would give the nearest approach to a perfect currency; would adjust the supply of money to the business needs of the country; would prevent panics, or periods of unsound inflation; would stimulate every industry by furnishing it with cheaper capital; would enable the farmers of the West, or the cotton growers of the South, to send their products to market at less expense than at present; would do away with the absurdity of two special interests controlling the finances of sixty-five millions of people; would not in the slightest degree diminish the legitimate earnings of capital; and would abolish any monopoly of money which may now exist. The experiment is a momentous one. Should it not be tried?

William Morris on Methods.

The following extract from an article in the "Commonweal" by its former editor must be a bitter pill to his successor, though very gratifying to Liberty. Substituting Anarchism and Anarchists for Socialism and Socialists, or qualifying Socialism by the adjective Anarchistic, I find in these words of William Morris a very good statement of my own views as to methods.

There are two tendencies in this matter of methods: on the one hand is our old acquaintance palliation, elevated now into vastly greater importance than it used to have, because of the growing discontent, and the obvious advance of Socialism; on the other is the method of partial, necessarily futile, inconsequent revolt, or riot rather, against the author-

ities, who are our absolute masters, and can easily put it down.

With both of these methods I disagree; and that the more because the palliatives have to be clamored for, and the riots carried out by men who do not know what Socialism is, and have no idea what their next step is to be if, contrary to all calculation, they should happen to be successful. Therefore, at the best our masters would be our masters still, because there would be nothing to take their place. *We are not ready for such a change as that!* The authorities might be a little shaken, perhaps, a little more inclined to yield something to the clamors of their slaves, but there would be slaves still, *as all men must be who are not prepared to manage their own business themselves.* Nay, as to the partial violent means, I believe that the occurrence of these would not shake the authorities at all, but would strengthen them rather, because they would draw to them the timid of all classes, — *i. e.*, all men but a very few.

I have mentioned the two lines on which what I should call the methods of impatience profess to work. Before I write a very few words on the only line of method on which some of us *can* work, I will give my views about the present state of the movement as briefly as I can.

The whole set opinion amongst those more or less touched by Socialism, who are not definite Socialists, is towards the New Trades' Unionism and palliation. Men believe that they can wrest from the capitalists some portion of their privileged profits, and the masters, to judge by the recent threats of combination on their side, believe also that this can be done. That it could only very partially be done, and that the men could not rest there if it were done, we Socialists know very well; but others do not. Let that pass for the present. The Parliamentary side of things seems in abeyance, at present; it has given place to the Trade Union side. But, of course, it will come up again; and in time, if there is nothing to cut across the logical sequence of events, it will achieve the *legal* Eight Hours Day, — with next to no results either to men or masters.

Now, it seems to me that at such a time, when people are not only discontented, but have really conceived a hope of bettering the condition of labor, while at the same time the means towards their end are doubtful; or, rather, when they take the very beginning of the means as an end in itself, — that this time, when people are excited about Socialism, and when many who know nothing about it think themselves Socialists, is the time of all others to put forward the simple principles of Socialism, regardless of the policy of the passing hour.

My readers will understand that in saying this I am speaking for those who are complete Socialists, — or let us call them Communists. I say for us *to make Socialists* is *the* business at present, and at present I do not think we can have any other useful business. Those who are not really Socialists — who are Trades Unionists, disturbance-breeders, or what not — will do what they are impelled to do, and we cannot help it. At the worst there will be some good in what they do; but we need not and cannot heartily work with them, when we know that their methods are beside the right way.

Our business, I repeat, is the making of Socialists, — *i. e.*, convincing people that Socialism is good for them and is possible. When we have enough people of that way of thinking, *they* will find out what action is necessary for putting their principles in practice. Until we have that mass of opinion, action for a general change that will benefit the whole people is *impossible*. Have we that body of opinion or anything like it? Surely not. If we look outside that glamor, that charmed atmosphere of party warfare in which we necessarily move, we shall see this clearly: that, though there are a great many who believe it possible to compel their masters by some means or another to behave better to them, and though they are prepared to compel them (by so-called peaceful means, strikes and the like), all but a very small minority are not prepared *to do without masters.* They do not believe in their own capacity to undertake the management of affairs, and to be responsible for their life in this world. When they are so prepared, then Socialism will be realized; but nothing can push it on a day in advance of that time.

Therefore, I say, make Socialists. We Socialists can do nothing else that is useful, and preaching and teaching is not out of date for that purpose; but rather for those who, like myself, do not believe in State Socialism, it is the only rational means of attaining to the New Order of Things.

A Nation of Washerwomen.

Every hater of humbug must rejoice at the victory which Parnell, by one of the boldest, pluckiest, stanchest fights ever made against fearful odds, has now virtually won over the hypocrites whom the London "Whirlwind" thus vigorously characterizes:

Perhaps the most discouraging feature of the spirit of the age is its inquisitiveness into the private life of public men. The claims of sound political measures, wise statesmanship, and patriotic purpose are drowned by the clamor of a prurient Puritanism; the slanders of the tea-table and the wash-tub overrule the destinies of nations and dislocate the careers of single-minded men. A new reign of terror seems to have been set on foot by the frowsy fanatics of the day; a new Inquisition, vexing and eavesdropping, in the sanctuaries of private life; a ghastly fetich-worship, at whose altars the brightest reputations and the goodliest prospects are lightly sacrificed. All things are considered from the washerwoman's point of view, with her breadth of mind and her perspicuity of judgment. The comments on the Parnell case are in my mind. It was the most straightforward case possible, attended by all extenuating circumstances imaginable. Mr. Parnell's behavior in a most trying position was manly and admirable. What has been his reward? A gang of unscrupulous hypocrites has sought to hound him out of public life; the miserable Methodists, whose grotesque parodies of Christianity imperil the repute of all religion, are vying with the prisoner of modern Babylon in the scurrility of their snivelling abuse; rollicking Tory blades are masquerading as champions of morality; and jealous subalterns are conspiring for a pretext to supplant their chief. Verily is England a nation of washerwomen!

For What We Fit Women.

[Alphonse Karr.]

The present education of women presupposes a future containing many more queens, duchesses, and bankers' wives than are possible and many more harlots than are necessary.

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